

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 IO-10 DIWY-01 CU-02 OES-03 HEW-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 COME-00

TRSE-00 OMB-01 SIL-01 LAB-04 /089 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9324

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WASAW

USUN NEW YORK 189

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TAGS: SHUM, PFOR, PROP, UNCSW, BU

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR AND DAY

REF: STATE 45955

1. SUMMARY: BULGARIA IS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR (IWY) AND CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION WAS DEVOTED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY (IWD) MARCH 8. THEME OF ALL ACTIVITY IS LIBERATED AND EQUAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY BULGARIA, AND PLIGHT OF WOMEN IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES. BULGARIA WILL BE REPRESENTED AT VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS AND HAS AND WILL HOST SEVERAL ITSELF. END SUMMARY.

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2. CHAIRMAN OF BULGARIAN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR IWY IS BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE POLITBURO MEMBER AND DEPUTY

PREMIER ZHIVKO ZHIVKOV (A MALE), WHO SET TONE FOR BULGARIAN OBSERVANCE IN TELEVISED PROCLAMATION JANUARY 8. HE STATED THAT FULL EQUALITY OF WOMEN -- DE FACTO AND DE JURE -- WAS BASIC FEATURE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS AND HE DECRIED "CRUEL EXPLOITATION" AND "SOCIAL MISFORTUNE" TO WHICH WOMEN UNDER CONDITIONS OF CAPITALISM ARE "DOOMED". THIS WAS CONTRASTED WITH HAPPY LOT OF WOMEN IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND BULGARIA IN PARTICULAR. IWY RECEIVED ADDITIONAL TELEVISION AND PRESS PLAY DURING MID-FEBRUARY VISIT OF UN ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL KHELVI SIPILE.

3. IWD ON MARCH 8 WAS MARKED BY SALUTATION FROM BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND BY OFFICIAL GATHERING ATTENDED BY PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV AND HIGHEST LEVEL PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS. MAIN ADDRESS BY CC POLITBURO MEMBER TSOLA DRAGOYCHEVA HONORED ROLE OF BULGARIAN WOMEN, POINTED OUT PROGRESSIVE POLICIES OF PARTY AND GOVERNMENT, CALLED UPON WOMEN TO FULFILL TASKS IN CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTRY AND SOCIALISM, AND MADE UNFLATTERING REMARKS ABOUT THE ROLE OF WOMEN UNDER CAPITALISM. ON MARCH 11, LUDMILLA ZHIVKOVA (DAUGHTER OF THE PRESIDENT), WHO IS BEING INCREASINGLY PUT IN THE PUBLIC EYE, HOSTED IWD TEA FOR WIVES OF DIPLOMATIC CHIEFS-OF-MISSIONS.

4. BULGARIA APPARENTLY INTENDS TO PARTICIPATE IN FOLLOWING IWY CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS: UN CONFERENCE IN MEXICO CITY; WORLD CONGRESS OF WOMEN, EAST GERMANY, OCTOBER 20-24; SEMINAR ON PROBLEMS OF DISARMAMENT, ORGANIZED BY INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION OF WOMEN AND INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM, NEW YORK, MAY 7-9; SEMINAR ORGANIZED BY WOMEN'S SECTION OF ORGANIZATION FOR SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLES OF ASIA AND AFRICA (NO DATE OR PLACE); INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF YOUNG WOMEN, MOSCOW; REGIONAL SEMINAR ON FAMILY PROBLEMS, POLAND; INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF WOMEN ENGINEERS AND STUDENTS, POLAND; AND INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON WORKING WOMEN, BUCHAREST.

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5. BULGARIA WILL HOST: FOURTH CONGRESS OF INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN JURISTS, VARNA, MAY; REGIONAL SEMINAR FOR EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE AMONG SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ON QUESTIONS OF TRADE UNION WORK IN RESOLVING PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN, SOFIA, JUNE; AND INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON "SOCIAL POLICY OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA", VARNA, SEPTEMBER.

6. COMMENT: FROM EMBASSY OBSERVATION, APPEARS THAT

ALL-IN-ALL BULGARIAN RECORD ON EQUALITY OF WOMEN IS
QUITE GOOD. TRADITIONAL STEROTYPES OF ROLE OF
WOMEN CONTINUE TO EXIST, BUT WOMEN HAVE ACCESS TO ALL
PROFESSIONS ON MUCH THE SAME BASIS AS MEN, AND THEY
CAN AND DO RISE TO MID AND HIGHER LEVELS OF INDUSTRY,
GOVERNMENT, AND PARTY. BULGARIANS IN INTERNATIONAL
MEETINGS CAN BE EXPECTED TO EMPHASIZE AND EXAGGERATE
THIS RECORD.
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